



NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture • Rural Development
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NATIONAL HOMEOWNERSHIP CELEBRATED WITH BEACH COUPLE

BEACH, June 25, 2004 – June has been declared as National Homeownership Month by President George W. Bush as announced by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. In the spirit of homeownership, and in celebration of National Homeownership Month, comes the story of Dave and Marge Ekre, homeowners in Beach, North Dakota. The Ekres found financial relief through USDA Rural Development to repair their leaking roof.

In September of 2002, the Ekres approached USDA Rural Development regarding their leaking roof. The roof was of flat construction and after many attempts to repair the roof, the ceiling was now damaged and feared it may cave in. The only way to stop the leaking was to construct a new roof.

Being elderly and living on a limited income, the Ekres could not qualify for a conventional loan to refinance their home to pay for the new roof. A second mortgage was also out of the question. The Ekres learned about USDA Rural Development's 504 Grant/Loan program through flyers posted throughout the community.

Through USDA Rural Development's 504 Loan/Grant Program, the Ekres were able to receive financial help for the construction of a new roof and making it possible for them to remain living in their home and in the Beach community.

USDA Rural Development serves as the lead federal entity for rural economic and community development needs. Its mission is to deliver programs that will support increased economic opportunity and improve the quality of life for rural residents. It administers financial and technical assistance to finance and foster growth in homeownership, business development and critical community and technology infrastructure. ***Rural Development is committed to the future of rural communities.***

In Fiscal Year 2003, USDA Rural Development provided over **\$73.5 million dollars** in loan and grant financing to North Dakota citizens. For more information, please visit our web site at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov>.

Committed to the future of rural communities.

"USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender."

To file a complaint of discrimination write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice or TDD).